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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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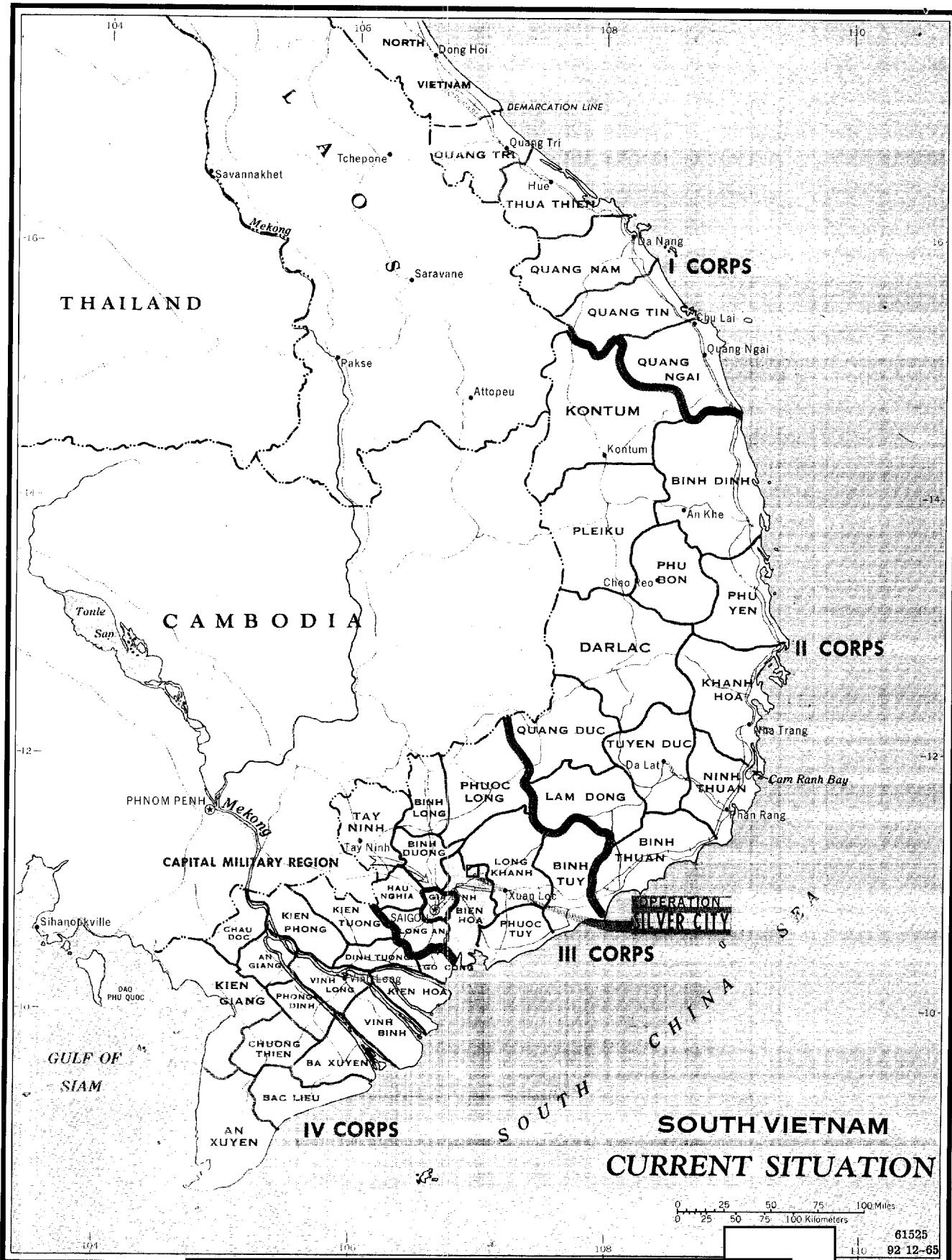
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EST)

[Political Developments in South Vietnam: General Thi so far appears to be cooperating with Premier Ky by trying to quiet agitation aroused by his dismissal as I Corps commander. Thi's public statements made in Da Nang since his arrival there yesterday have all been in a helpful vein, except for one sarcastic reference to his "sinus trouble" causing things to "smell bad." He has thanked his followers for their loyal support, but admonished them to look to the higher interests of the nation and to settle down. He also stressed his continued friendship with Ky.]

[It is not known whether self-seeking political and Buddhist elements will be able to influence Thi adversely during his scheduled visit of about two days in I Corps. These elements, far from committed to Thi, are seeking to promote his dismissal as an issue to use against the government to advance their own ends. Premier Ky has admitted that permitting Thi's return to I Corps is a calculated risk, but believes that on balance it will help undercut government critics.]

[Peaceful rallies, each attended by some 10,000 Buddhists, took place yesterday in both Hué and Saigon, the latter being the first such demonstration in the capital since Thi's dismissal. There is as yet no official reporting on the Saigon meeting. Press accounts differ as to whether the tone of remarks made by a ranking Buddhist monk were in a moderate or inflammatory vein, but he appears to have held forth the goal of a return to civilian rule.]

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[] the Buddhists will continue to press for government concessions on four basic demands--a more democratically based civilian council to serve as a national assembly, the

reinstatement in some official position of retired generals from the former Minh junta in order to restore national unity, steps to return the military "to the battlefield" and restore civilian authority, and concrete progress toward economic and social reforms. The Buddhists claim to have already received partial concessions from Ky and Chief of State Thieu, but it seems likely that little more than probing for weak points and areas of agreement has been achieved to date.]

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[the Bud-
dhists do not desire Ky's overthrow, but merely an end to quarrelling and ineffectiveness on the part of the military. If Thi remains on an even keel in his relations with Ky and peacefully quits the country in a few days, some of the Buddhist thunder may be undercut and a temporary cooling-off period may ensue. The Buddhists, however, may feel that there is already a sufficient breach of military unity for them to continue to press for more drastic changes. The ruling military Directorate reportedly is to meet on 18 March to consider how to handle this threat.]

The Military Situation in South Vietnam: A battalion of the US 173rd Airborne Brigade participating in Operation SILVER CITY battled enemy forces for nearly five hours yesterday in Bien Hoa Province. The Viet Cong disengaged after sustaining losses of 275 killed and two captured. US casualties were three killed and 104 wounded. Earlier in the day, US forces discovered two enemy arms caches containing some 66 weapons and 14,000 rounds of ammunition.

Since its initiation on 7 March, SILVER CITY has resulted in cumulative Viet Cong losses of 293 killed, one captured, and 96 weapons (31 crew served) seized. Allied casualties are 12 killed (10 US) and 170 wounded (160 US). South Vietnamese forces have terminated their portion of the operation without significant enemy contact.

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Indonesia: President Sukarno is trying to renege on the authority he accorded General Suharto last weekend.

Yesterday a presidential announcement asserted that the order to Suharto was being misinterpreted, and that only Sukarno is responsible for carrying out decisions and for appointing his assistants. The announcement stated that the public was trying to force its will on the President regarding cabinet composition and was deviating from "established ways of consultation."

The announcement apparently was provoked by the pro-Suharto mass rally of the previous day. A statement read at the rally called on him to purge the cabinet and other government agencies of Communist elements. Prior to Sukarno's announcement, students had also presented a statement to parliament calling for an overhaul of the cabinet and listing 24 ministers they want dismissed.

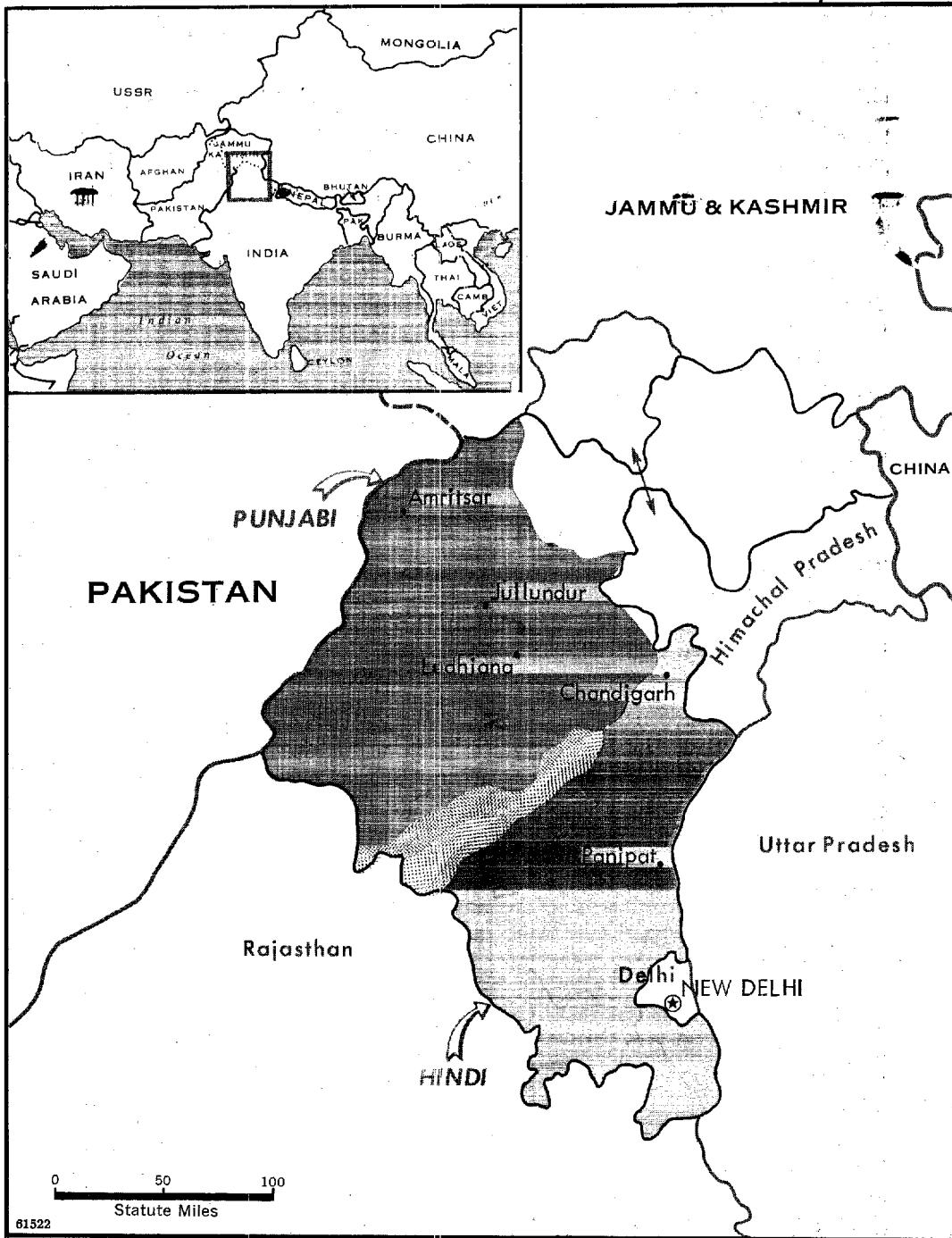
[Sukarno is keeping up his efforts to erode support for Suharto within the armed forces, but does not appear to have had any significant success.]

Although Suharto holds more actual power than he did a week ago, he has publicly denied that any executive power has been transferred to him or that the President's authority has decreased. He has likened his present duties to the security responsibilities conferred by the President after 1 October.

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PUNJAB STATE, INDIA



India: Communal riots in Punjab State are presenting a new problem to Prime Minister Gandhi's hard-pressed government.

The disorders began on 11 March, after the ruling Congress Party bowed to pressures from the Sikh religious group for a separate Punjabi-speaking state in that area of the Punjab in which most of the Sikhs reside. New Delhi feared that the Sikh's most influential figure might carry out his threatened self-immolation on the issue and bring on violent communal disorders and losses for the Congress Party in next year's general elections.

On hearing the party's announcement, Punjabi-speaking Hindus in northwestern Punjab rioted out of fear of Sikh domination in a partitioned state. They were joined by the Hindu extremist Jan Sangh party which advocates the supremacy of the Hindi language. [At least six] persons have been killed so far. ^

Although the Sikh response has been relatively restrained, communal feeling runs high. According to press reports, the Sikh leader has announced that he will still immolate himself if the decision is not implemented within four weeks.

The government seems prepared to apply whatever force is necessary to put down the disorders, and has alerted army units for action if the police are unable to cope with the situation. Nevertheless, the communal clashes, together with recent leftist-instigated rioting in Calcutta, a revolt of Mizo Hill tribes, and the food shortages and other economic troubles, are keeping Mrs. Gandhi's government on the defensive. [redacted]

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West Germany: [A leading West German official has suggested that the current confrontation with France may afford the opportunity to push plans for NATO nuclear sharing.]

[State Secretary Carstens, who has been acting as foreign minister during Gerhard Schroeder's vacation, told a US official on 14 March that progress on nuclear sharing would serve as a counter to De Gaulle's moves. Carstens thought that the matter of French reaction to NATO nuclear force proposals was no longer a problem.]

[Bonn, according to Carstens, had been encouraged by the "positive remarks" made to Erhard by President Johnson on German nuclear sharing proposals during their meeting in Washington last December. Carstens claimed that the British remained ready to go ahead with an alliance nuclear force. He thought that the subject could be taken up during Erhard's visit to London, now scheduled for May.]

[In recent public statements Schroeder and Defense Minister von Hassel have made clear that the Erhard government will not be satisfied solely with the McNamara Special Committee, and still desires German participation in an alliance nuclear force.]

[Other members of the alliance--especially those who already fear that France's military disengagement will leave West Germany in a preponderant position on the continent--may well question that this is a good time to reopen the controversial issue of nuclear sharing. London almost certainly still hopes that Bonn's nuclear needs can be satisfied within the Special Committee.]

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UK - Common Market: [Paris may be attempting to disarm European opposition to France's attack on NATO by holding out the prospect of resuming talks on Britain's membership in the Common Market.]

[According to press reports, the French stated at a meeting of the seven Western European Union countries in London on 15-16 March that they now believe it desirable for the UK to enter the EEC. In announcing this at a press conference, British Foreign Secretary Stewart reportedly said that this removes one obstacle to British entry.]

[In further comments, Stewart reiterated that London still insists on protection for British farm interests, the Commonwealth countries, and Britain's EFTA partners. He also said the withdrawal of French forces from NATO would make it difficult for Britain to link up with the EEC. According to one press report, however, he added that the Labor government--if re-elected on 31 March--would initiate "preliminary exchanges" with the Common Market countries.]

[France probably expects that, should preliminary discussions of Britain's accession to the EEC take place, they would tend to forestall a firm stand against France on NATO issues. Over the long run, Paris might hope that such talks could lead to renewed consideration of some kind of mechanism for coordinating European foreign and military policies.]

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USSR: Cosmos 110, the Soviet satellite carrying two dogs, was recovered yesterday, apparently because the dogs' physical condition was deteriorating.

The Soviets have announced that the dogs were in "good condition" after recovery, but that their heartbeats had become abnormal toward the end of the flight. The space craft landed shortly before sunset, and recovery operations were carried out under difficult conditions. If the Soviets had been able to wait several days, a landing [in daylight] earlier in the day would have been possible.

The satellite, in orbit 22 days, was designed primarily to study the effects of radiation and prolonged weightlessness on living creatures. In addition to the dogs, a variety of biological specimens was carried. Cosmos 110 was in a higher orbit than any [previous] ^{manned} satellite, [carrying living creatures], and its orbit carried it through the lower part of the Van Allen radiation belt.

The data transmitted to earth by the satellite and study of the recovered specimens will provide valuable information applicable to prolonged space flights such as lunar missions and space stations. The longest Soviet manned flight--Vostok 5 in 1963--lasted five days.

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NOTES

France-USSR: [There is a good chance that De Gaulle will sign a French-Soviet space agreement during his visit to Moscow in June, according to a senior French space official. Both sides would view the agreement primarily as a political maneuver, but it could provide for the launch of a relatively simple French scientific satellite by the Soviets. The Soviets' unwillingness during six months of preliminary talks to provide detailed information on their booster systems and to grant the French access to Soviet launch facilities suggests that such an agreement might never be carried out.]

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Turkey: General Cevdet Sunay's appointment as a senator on 15 March, and his resignation as chief of the Turkish general staff open the way for his eventual election by Parliament as president of Turkey. The virtual certainty that seriously ailing President Gursel will never be able to resume his duties has brought increasing pressure for his replacement. Sunay is acceptable to both major parties, and is friendly to the US.

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Belgium: Agreement of the Catholic and Liberal parties to form a coalition with Paul Vanden Boeynants as prime minister will bring a more conservative government to Belgium. Catholic labor groups are backing Vanden Boeynants, although they are uneasy about his alliance with the business-oriented Liberals. The departure from the Foreign Ministry of Socialist Paul Henri Spaak may leave the government more vulnerable to rising popular pressures for reduction of the national defense budget--a move which could affect Belgium's commitments both to NATO and in the Congo.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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THE PRESIDENT

The Vice President

Executive Offices of the White House

Special Counsel to the President

The Special Assistant for National Security Affairs

The Scientific Adviser to the President

The Director of the Budget

The Department of State

The Secretary of State

The Under Secretary of State

The Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

The Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

The Counselor and Chairman of the Policy Planning Council

The Director of Intelligence and Research

The Treasury Department

The Secretary of the Treasury

The Under Secretary of the Treasury

The Department of Defense

The Secretary of Defense

The Deputy Secretary of Defense

The Secretary of the Army

The Secretary of the Navy

The Secretary of the Air Force

The Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs)

The Chairman, The Joint Chiefs of Staff

Chief of Naval Operations, United States Navy

Chief of Staff, United States Air Force

Chief of Staff, United States Army

Commandant, United States Marine Corps

U. S. Rep., Military Committee and Standing Group, NATO

Supreme Allied Commander, Europe

Commander in Chief, Pacific

Commander in Chief, Atlantic

The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

The Director, The Joint Staff

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

The Department of Justice

The Attorney General

The Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Director

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

The Administrator

The Atomic Energy Commission

The Chairman

The National Security Agency

The Director

The United States Information Agency

The Director

The National Indications Center

The Director

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